

Representative Marcy Kaptur (D-OH) released the following statement in response to President Obama's joint address to Congress this evening:

"I agree with President Obama that even though we are facing a long road of rebuilding and recovery, our nation will emerge stronger than before. The American people are extraordinarily resilient, and we will overcome this challenge.

"If the President is truly looking to reduce our deficits and return our fiscal house to order, he should include our trade deficits that continue to clock in at hundreds of billions of dollars each year. We must focus on opening markets to American goods so that our workers compete on a level playing field.

"Any long-term plan to strengthen, secure, and stabilize our economy must include comprehensive reform of our trade and tax policies. America should eschew the flawed NAFTA-model of trade in favor of a people-centered approach, and we should examine how the value-added tax affects our ability to export. Without a close examination of how our market access is hindered by non-tariff trade barriers in closed markets like China, Japan, and Korea, the U.S. will continue to hemorrhage money abroad.

"I am encouraged by the President's dedication to peace in the Middle East and by his approach to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"I look with anticipation to further detail in his budget request later this week.

"More than ever, Congress and the Administration must stand on the side of the American people."

The Congresswoman was joined for the address by Toledo-native Lisa Rice, who serves as vice president of the National Fair Housing Alliance.